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THE
GIPSY LASS:

A TALE.

AND

THE FAIR THIEF.

*On earth, o'er hill and dale I roam,
There I, alas! have no abode,
But heav'n is the poor Gipsy's home,
The Gipsy's father is her GOD.*



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THE GIPSY LASS:

A BALLAD.



I.

I SING of a poor Gipsy lass,
Myself the theme of mine own song,
And when I through the village pass,
Around the lads and lasses throng,

II.

To hear me in the pale moon light,
Relate the stormy life I've led,
And ask a lodging for the night,
To a poor, friendless, Gipsy maid.

III.

The eve is cold, the way is drear,
And must I climb the mountain steep,
Perhaps, when my sad tale you hear,
You will for the poor Gipsy weep.

IV.

I am a girl of brisk sixteen,
With ruddy lips, and auburn hair,
My little hat beneath my chin
Is knotted with a careless air.

V.

My lips, that like the rose-buds blow,
No lover's kisses ever knew,
My bosom's white as wreaths of snow,
And melts, alas! as quickly too.

VI.

Such is the image oft I've seen,
Inverted in the placid rill,
And with quick step I pace the green,
Or wander o'er the rocky hill.

VII.

My father was a soldier bold,
Who in a battle lost his leg,
But poor, neglected, lame, and old,
Was forc'd by cruel stars to beg.

VIII.

My mother was his faithful wife,
And I the fruit of all their love;
Ah! doom'd to know the ills of life
Before I could its pleasures prove.

IX.

My mother died, I a poor child,
Was left by my old father's side,
To go with him o'er hill and wild,
And crave a boon too oft deny'd.

X.

One wint'ry night while fast asleep,
I on his tender breast was laid,
He died—then thou wert left to weep,
Without a friend, poor Gipsy maid.

XI.

Now am I a poor Gipsy lass,
With not one heart to bleed for me,
And many a frightful night I pass,
And many a weary day I see.

XII.

Oft brush I o'er the thick night dew,
Where dwarfish fays are wont to skim,
Or in the heath-bells flower-cup blue,
They swift across the runlet swim.

XIII.

In lonely rills by the moon's beam,
They oft like water-spiders play,
Quick round the silver curling stream,
Where dancing bubbles kiss the ray.

XIV.

When playful in the valley damp,
 Delights the Will-o'-wisp to dance,
 And oft the Water-wrath's pale lamp,
 O'er the dank pool is seen to glance.

XV.

Full many a dreary winter's night,
 Amid the trackless snow I tread,
 To reach some cheerful cottage light,
 Far glimmering thro' the nightly shade.

XVI.

And many a bitter storm I brave,
 With naked feet and bosom bare,
 Alas! nor shade, nor cot I have,
 To shield me from the piercing air.

XVII.

When wand'ring o'er the mountain drear,
 Cold and incrusted o'er with snow,
 Who knows the many ills I bear?
 What heart bleeds for the Gipsy's wo?

XVIII.

Thrice blest! who the long winter's eve,
 Sit round the social blazing fire,
 And hear the tempests idly rave,
 Who hear, but never feel their ire.

XIX.

But I must pace the midnight gloom,
 Oft spurn'd from every cot and shade,
 In the wide world there is no room,
 Where I may rest my weary head.

XX.

When thro' the window oft I've spied,
 The blaze shine on each face so gay,
 I've shed a tear, and shook my head,
 Thought my fate hard, and march'd away.

XXI.

My beverage is the brook serene;
 Unheeded, wand'ring sad like me,
 And oft my bed the dewy green,
 Beneath some charitable tree.

XXII.

For me no tear was ever shed,
 Friends have I none of human kind,
 But GOD cares for the Gipsy maid,
 And shields her from the piercing wind.

XXIII.

GOD gives the bitter with the sweet,
 He gives no rose without a thorn,
 'Tis thus for heaven he makes us meet,
 When we the ill have bravely borne.

XXIV.

For truest virtue is display'd,
 When ills are to the virtuous given,
 The glow-worm twinkles in the shade,
 And night reveals the stars of heav'n.

XXV.

On earth, o'er hill and dale I roam,
 There I, alas! have no abode,
 But heav'n is the poor Gipsy's home,
 The Gipsy's father is her God.



THE FAIR THIEF.



I TELL, with equal truth and grief,
 That little Kate's an arrant thief;
 Before the urchin well could go,
 She stole the whiteness of the snow;
 And more—that whiteness to adorn,
 She stole the blushes of the morn;
 Stole all the softness *Æ*ther pours
 On primrose buds, in vernal show'rs.

There's no repeating all her wiles:
 She stole the Grace's winning smiles;

'Twas quickly seen she robb'd the sky,
 To plant a star in either eye;
 She pilfer'd orient pearl for teeth,
 And stole the cow's ambrosial breath;
 The cherry, steep'd in morning dew,
 Gave moisture to her lips, and hue.

These were her infant spoils; a store
 To which, in time, she added more:
 At twelve she stole from Cyprus' Queen
 Her air and love-commanding mien;
 Stole Juno's dignity; and stole,
 From Pallas, sense to charm the soul;
 She sung—amaz'd the Syrens heard,
 And to assert their voice appear'd;
 She play'd—the muses from their hill
 Wonder'd who thus had stole their skill;
 Apollo's wit was next her prey,
 And then the beams that light the day;
 While Jove, her pilfering thefts to crown,
 Pronounc'd these beauties all her own,
 Pardon'd her crimes, and prais'd her art;
 And t'other day she stole—my heart.

Cupid! if lovers are thy care,
 Revenge thy votary on the fair;
 Do justice on her stolen charms,
 And let her prison be—my arms.

